

looked upon as the nation's reservoir for highly potable water. We ought to protect that. I don't think what we're doing here today does that. I think that our intentions are sort-sighted. I think, Senator Beutler, we ought to look at the bigger picture and that the threats to the Cities of Lincoln and Omaha are not from rural Nebraska but from outstate Nebraska and I would hope that in another year we would have a bill that would properly address that. And so, therefore, I'm going to vote against the bill. I commend Senator Beutler for his interest, but I think we have a bigger problem to solve and I would like to have his help in doing that. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Schmit. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: I'd call the question.

PRESIDENT MOUL: There's no one else seeking to speak on this bill so we'll proceed with the vote. Heard the motion to advance to E & R. We do have a request for a machine vote. All those in favor please vote aye, opposed nay. Oh...Senator Beutler, would you like to close?

SENATOR BEUTLER: Just a couple words, if I may, Madam President. Senator Schmit, I appreciate the tenor and the thrust of your remarks and, as you know from prior conversations, I think there are a number of things that we both agree need to be addressed. And I would remark to you that I believe that this bill will have a very positive effect on our arguments with other states with regard to how much of our water or how much of the water coming down the Platte, for example, is needed. To the extent that the water in the Platte is legally bound to certain kinds of uses, it makes it easier for us to protect the amount of water that we're getting in our disputes with other states and, as the cities demonstrate their needs for this water by applying for and obtaining legal rights to the water, that will add immediately to the statistical effect to our positive benefit. So I think that's another element that really hasn't been discussed that is in favor of this bill, but beyond that I would simply say in closing that I think that a nice spirit has developed, both on the Natural Resources Committee and in the Legislature generally, in trying to deal with the issue of water seen from everybody's point of view and I think the whole progression of LB 948, Senator Schrock's bill to reestablish the irrigators' rights in Central's District, demonstrated this. I think the cooperation that the ag groups